



Black & Pink



a family of
LGBTQ
prisoners and
“free world”
LGBTQA allies
who support
each other

March 2012 Newsletter

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This issue of Black & Pink
Newsletter was sponsored by
donor Naomi Sobel!

Dear Friends,

This past few months newsletters have included a significant number of submissions related to faith, God, and religion. I want to take this opportunity to share some theological ideas that directly relate to the Black and Pink family. I also want to note that Black and Pink does not prescribe to any specific religious doctrine; we celebrate the queer and abolitionist perspectives available in the great multitude of faith traditions.

What do we learn from the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam about prisons and prisoners? In the Qu'ran we are told, “*They feed with food the needy wretch, the orphan, and the prisoner, for love of Allah, saying, 'We wish for no reward nor thanks from you.'*” In the First Testament of the Bible, the prophet Isaiah proclaims, “*God has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, And freedom to prisoners; to proclaim the favorable year of God.*” In the Second Testament's Letter to the Hebrews, the writer is clear, “*Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were.*” These are singular quotes from traditions that have an abundance of love for those who are incarcerated. It is worth noting that the greatest leaders of these three traditions were all considered criminal by the governments they lived under. Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad all broke laws of the land. To be in prison and/or to be a convicted person puts you in the company of prophets. Who better to explore the meaning of God or the Divine than those who are locked behind prison walls?

One of my favorite theologians, Rebecca Parker, wrote in *Blessing the World*, “*a theology adequate to the realities of violence in our world must speak from the depths of our life experience. It must speak words of anguish and words of hope. The anguish is this: Violence can break our hearts and efface the sacred goodness of life in this world. The hope is this: Love, in its myriad forms, can recall us to life.*” One does not have to believe in a monotheistic God to find room at the table of theology. There is enough space in the dialogue for Pagans, Buddhists, Hindus, Spiritualists, Humanists, Atheists, Wiccans, and all those who are seeking justice rooted living in the world. We all share the same responsibility Parker writes about. We need to speak words of anguish and words of hope. We need to speak truth to the realities of suffering while finding the moments of resilience and survival within ourselves and our communities.

Too often conservative, hate-filled chaplains enter the prisons under the guise of care and compassion. These are the pastors, Rabbis, Imams, and other religious leaders who make money off the suffering of prisoners. They tell prisoners they must repent in order to be saved, never taking time to challenge the prison system for the evil it enacts. Faith, however, is bigger than them, bigger than prisons, bigger than suffering, and bigger than us. Whether your faith is in God, the Earth, or in the human capability to exist, it is a deep sense of faith that keeps the struggle for justice going. It is necessary to also remind every single reader that gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, same-gender-loving, queer people are beloved and sacred parts of all faith traditions. There is room for a queer inclusive understanding of that tradition. The Divine is far bigger and loving than any hateful preacher. Passages in the Bible and the Qu'ran that declare same-sex or gender non-conforming life sinful can be understood in different ways and in the context of the time when they were written. If you need religious resources to further your queer inclusive perspective on faith, please reach out. Each person has inherent worth and dignity. Through relationship building we will, together, build the beloved community we dream of, knowing that once there were no prisons, that day will come again!

In loving solidarity,
Jason



CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Black & Pink,

First I want to start off by saying thank you for giving all of us that find ourselves locked away a voice and a place to express our opinions and our views, no matter what walk of life we all come from, no matter what we have done so far in our life to get to the point we are at. I think we all share something in common... We all want the freedom to be able to live without shame or fear of who we are. The sad truth is that most people spend their whole life pretending to be something else and end up living an unhappy and unfulfilled life. I want to call out to all of you who are in the closet or are afraid of what people might think. The most important thing I can tell you is believe in yourself and for once in your life take a chance, it's okay to be who you are. You were born this way, and you're not alone.

Commit to victory and accept no alternative,
James, Washington State



Happy New Year Boys and Girls! Hope 2012 is a great year for you all. I believe 2012 will be a year of Achievements, Progress, and Success for our Community. Our voices will be heard, we will not be denied. The seeds of change have been planted, now we must nurture their growth through Education and bringing awareness to the inequities and inequality we face as a community. It is time for the scales to turn, for Lady Justice to take off her blindfold and see the institutional hypocrisy that is allowed to roam the Halls and Chambers of the places built to protect and serve All the People. We cannot allow ourselves to be denied our full rights as people. 2012 will be a fine year! Stand Strong!

Love and Peace,
Savannah, Florida



Hi To All My B&P Family,

I want to write in response the issue of being religious and gay. I am Bi-sexual and tried to run and hide from it for a long time. I was raised in a Christian home. I stopped trying to change who I am 30 years ago. I am very open about my sexuality and have a lot of respect for being who I am. You are who you are. If you feel happy and free when you are being Gay then that is who you are. I love and respect the Christian family but I feel that you should find God in yourself and be who you are and not draw the line in your life due to what one religious group or the Bible says. God lives in us all and if you are Bi or Gay in your heart, then be you, be happy and trust in the God that lives inside of you, not a book or group. Be true to yourself and you will be happy.

I love you all!
-Steve, Florida

Dearest Extended Family at Black & Pink,

I wanted to send this letter of support and encouragement. My name is Kitty, I am a 48 year old fully endowed , pre-operative transsexual currently incarcerated at the Eastern New York Correctional Facility! I've been here 2 ½ years.

I've been studying religion forever. I was born and raised as a Catholic. But am on file in the system as Jewish. I have done a 2 year visit course with the Jehovah's Witnesses recently. I attend the Quaker's service here. And I communicate regularly with the Christians in the yard. But before anything, I'm a Woman.

The Bible clearly says that no human person is perfect. It also says that we are all God's children! In light of all of the billions of dollars paid as settlements to cover up for all of the pedophile Priests, both straight and homosexual, in the Catholic Archdiocese, I have learned to "read around" certain scriptures that do not condone alternative lifestyles. In this day and age, how can same sex love and transexualism be wrong?

Be proud of what and who you are, Be comfortable within your skin...Celebrate life and continue to remain close to God. Pray for the ignorant and biased people who presently surround us. Good luck to everyone! I love you.

The Legendary,
Miss Kitty, New York



Getting Treatment

Being a transsexual in prison offers many challenges. From dealing with harassment from your fellow inmates and/or the guards to getting treatment. In some states getting treatment for Gender Identity Disorder (GID) is one of the hardest challenges that you will face. If you are seeking treatment there are several things that you must keep in mind:

1. You have to have a diagnosis of suffering from GID. Either one made prior to your incarceration or one from within the system or Department of Correction (DOC).
2. If you do not have a diagnosis of GID then you need to contact the mental health department with your concerns to start the process of getting a diagnosis and treatment. You will most likely have to start with a counselor to get a referral to see the psychologist and/or the psychiatrist.
3. If the people you see within the mental health department are not knowledgeable in the diagnosis and treatment of GIDs then try to get seen by someone that has training and experience in the diagnosis and treatment of GID's.
4. If you are unsuccessful in your efforts to get to see someone about your GID, send letters explaining your situation to the deputy/assistant director or deputy/assistant commissioner of the department of correction that you are in. Then if that gets no satisfactory response then you go the next step and write to the director or commissioner of the department. Also be sure to write to the head of the mental health department at your unit and also the one over the entire department. Keep copies of all your correspondence for your records. Also, make sure that the copies say exactly the same thing as the ones you send out.
5. If after writing letters, you still do not get treatment, it is time to file a Formal Complaint or Grievance. Be sure to list all persons involved and the dates. If you do not complete the entire process including the appeals stage, you may be unable to pursue your complaint in a court (a 1983 civil rights suit). This is per the Prison Reform Litigation Act (PRLA).
6. If you were taking hormones prior to your arrest and incarceration and can provide documentation that they were prescribed by a licensed doctor then the DOC is required to continue them at the same level unless a doctor says that they are detrimental to your health. *Continued on page 4*

Continued from page 3: Prisons and jails are required by law to give you some form of treatment. But, they are not required to give you the form of treatment that you want. The treatment given can be little as psychotherapy.

If a licensed doctor recommends or prescribes you a certain course of treatment such as hormone therapy then the prison or jail may be required to give you this medically necessary treatment. If the prison or jail refuses to do so and you have exhausted the entire grievance process then you can file a 1983 complaint. The law library at your unit should be able to provide the forms for you. If not then you can write to the clerk of the district or area that you are in and request them. The law library has or can get this address for you. You will have to send copies of grievance/s and the appeals process along with the completed 1983 form to show that you have exhausted the grievance process. You may also want to send copies of all the letters and/or requests that you have sent to various individuals and their responses if any to show their involvement. It is a good idea to keep a record of the dates that you spoke with people and about your desire for treatment as well as the dates of all the letters and requests that you have sent.

There are several cases that deal with the treatment of GID. If you have access to a computer that has a data base of cases in your law library use the search feature and use the keywords: Gender Identity Disorder; Transsexualism; Gender Dysphoria; and Transgender.

There are a lot of cases. Some deal with discrimination, some with prisons, and other with medical issues. Some examples are: "Gammett v. Idaho Board of Correction," "Schwenk v. Hartford," "White v. Farrier," and "Fields v. Smith." You will just have to see which ones you can use.

If you do not have access to a computer then ask a law library worker if they can use the computer to look up the cases for you. They are generally able to at least point you in the right direction. The American Civil Liberties Union may be able to help you. Good luck and keep up the good fight. Be careful. Once you start requesting treatment you may become a target of the inmates and/or administration.

The things that I've stated here are things that I have discovered from personal experience and research. You have to educate yourself about your illness. Contact support groups and advocacy groups. I am not a lawyer nor do I claim to be an expert in these legal matters or on GID's. But I am sympathetic to your plight. I am also an inmate seeking treatment in my state. I have already caused a policy to be written that has been of some help to incoming persons suffering from GID. Before I started my campaign for treatment there was no policy and people coming into the system taking hormones were not allowed to continue them. But now they are if they have documented proof of them.

Sincerely,
Anastasia, Arizona



*Editor's Note: Anastasia has shared some great knowledge and resources with us. Some people may be uncomfortable asking to be given a "diagnosis" of a psychiatric illness to receive "treatment," or the existence of this diagnosis within Psychiatry in the first place. However, within the belly of the prison beast, you may find it helpful to use the tactics Anastasia described to gain the things you want: hormones, permission to present yourself according to your gender identity, etc. It's up to you, best of luck.

**Editor's Note: We receive many submissions to the Newsletter that are addressed to specific people, or are in direct response to other articles that individuals wrote. Because of the unjust rules of the prison system, our Newsletter can't "third party" or pass communication between individuals or it will be often refused by prisons. We are better able to print contributions that are addressed to the Family of Black & Pink, and not to individual people. Please do respond to the feelings and ideas and experiences that other people write, but write your responses for the Newsletter to the whole LGBTQ Community of B&P. Someday, this will all be different. Keep your letters coming!

our NEWS

Hi Family,

My name is Letta Neely and I've been editing B&P for the past few months. Given that so many of you share yourselves monthly, I figure maybe you'd like to know a bit about me and also hear some ideas about the directions in which B&P can go over the next year.

First and foremost, I am an abolitionist. I believe that the Prison Industrial Complex is a major tentacle of the slaveocracy which exists in the United States and beyond. I am committed to exposing these present days' connections to the antebellum period. I am also a poet, a playwright, a recovering drug addict and a dyke. I am the eldest of 4 kids and I am originally from Indiana. Like every human, however, these few descriptors only serve as beginning "hello". Just a short bio to give a basic form to the body. We'll have opportunities to grow in knowledge of each other.

But I'll tell you this story.....I came out *officially* when I was around 18 but to my own knowledge I've never been "in". When I was 9, I liked this girl. We'll call her "S". So I did what most every 9 year old did at the time. I very carefully and neatly tore a sheet of paper from my math notebook. Using a red crayola, I decorated it (in an extremely butch fashion, lol) with two hearts and scribed: "*Do you want to be my girlfriend? Circle YES no MaYbE...Please say YES!*" Then I folded the note up in a triangle and with palms sweating, I passed it backwards through three other classmates. I prayed the messengers wouldn't peek and more importantly, I prayed that my teacher (my other major crush at the time) would keep her back turned toward the board long enough for my request to reach my beloved. Even though I kept my eyes glued on the board and did not turn around to see this...I remember hearing the "pssts" and the notes passing through each person's hands. I remember hearing the girl unfold the note. And I can tell you, even though you may not be able to see it....dark skinned Black people do blush. Butterflies in my stomach kept me fidgeting until recess when "S" handed it back to me. She stood there as I unfolded the triangle with trembling hands. She had circled YES in blue colored pencil. We stood there smiling at each other for a few years (okay so it was probably a few seconds), then ran off to join the kickball game.

We played together everyday, wrote love letters. On Fridays, we had sleep overs where we stayed up all night watching movies, talking and "stuff". In my 9 year old way, I loved S for about a month before we broke up. I know that I am lucky that my first foray into lesbian dating didn't have a stigma attached to it. Sending the letter, getting her to be my girl felt normal so it was normal. The next girl I asked didn't say yes. She gave me note to the teacher, who gave it to the principal. I got a paddling. After that, it freedom (with regard to sexuality) had boundaries that felt like barbed wire fences. It is this first sense of wild freedom for which I continually advocate for all of us. We all deserve it. I think it is a basic right. It feels sooo amazing.

I offer myself, my work with B&P and in life, to you all in this vein. This newsletter should be whatever you want it to be. I am only a vessel to help make it happen. Please let me know what you want to know about each other, about what's happening inside and outside the bars. Let's let this newsletter be like love letters we send each other across the divisions. A love like ours should be long lasting and will require telling truth about our hurts, our glories, our questions, and our struggles. Toward this continual building of our relationship, I propose we have themes for the newsletters. Each month, we'll have many of your letters that go along with the theme. (Of course, whatever going on with you that you want to share is always welcome) Suggestions for upcoming themes are needed. So send them along! **The theme for May is "Your coming out story"** and the **theme for June is "Pride: What are you proud of?"** This doesn't have to be specifically lgbti related at all. Just something about you/your peoples or your community about which you celebrate. I look forward to hearing from you all.

In peace, solidarity, and freedom,
Letta S. Neely

Occupy for Prisoners' national day of action Liberation reports from the streets

Contributors: Michelle Schudel, Yari Osorio and Eugene Puryear 2/24/2012

San Francisco/Bay Area

In front of the notorious San Quentin prison, 10 miles north of San Francisco, 800 people came out to Occupy for Prisoners on February 20. San Quentin has the largest population of death row prisoners – 648 – in the United States. The protest demands included freedom for political prisoners, abolition of the death penalty and the “three strikes” rule (the California law that requires life sentences for a third felony conviction, regardless of the offense) and real rehabilitation programs for prisoners. There was a great spirit of solidarity and unity among all the prisoners’ rights organizations, families of prisoners and activists from many movements. Large contingents were present from Occupy Oakland and Occupy San Francisco, and the majority were youth.

Moving accounts were given by former prisoners who spoke of the traumas of incarceration, torture, lengthy sentences and the difficulties of finding a job and housing after release. In an historic encounter, Luis Talamáñez and Sundiata Tate, members of the San Quentin 6, returned to the prison 35 years after their acquittal in a political trial. They and four other comrades had been brutally tortured and put on trial after prison guards murdered prisoner-revolutionary George Jackson on Aug. 21, 1971 (known as Black August.) Holding up a large picture of Jackson in tribute, Talamáñez said, “Those of us who are free owe it to prisoners to share our freedom. Let’s not stop fighting for their liberation.”

Gloria La Riva spoke for the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five. She highlighted the struggle of the five Cubans wrongfully imprisoned in the United States for protecting Cuba from U.S.-sponsored terrorist attacks. Both La Riva and Claude Marks of Freedom Archive read statements from the Cuban Five’s Gerardo Hernández and Ramón Hernández. La Riva ended by urging the crowd to be alert and oppose U.S. sanctions and war against Iran and Syria.

Mumia Abu-Jamal sent a ringing message of solidarity to Occupy for Prisoners. Other prisoners highlighted were Leonard Peltier, Bradley Manning, Oscar López Rivera, Hugo Pinell (who San Quentin has held in complete isolation for 41 years,) the Angola 3 and Lynne Stewart. The Party for Socialism and Liberation provided the sound system and other logistical support.

New York City

Protesters from diverse organizations across the city gathered at Lincoln Correctional Facility in Harlem to stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters behind bars. Members from the ANSWER Coalition (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) and the PSL (including vice-presidential candidate Yari Osorio) joined the demonstration on the south side of 110th Street, across from the correctional facility.

Around 250 activists, students and organizers attended, starting off by holding a “teach-in” using the people’s mic. One person would shout “The U.S prison industry is!” and then point to someone else who would complete the sentence with something like “a tool of the 1 percent to keep us oppressed!” After the teach-in, protesters chanted “Let the 99 percent out! Put the 1 percent in!” referring to our common desire to see our brother and sisters free while we incarcerate the real thieves and murderers who sit on Wall Street.

After that, protesters marched up Malcolm X Boulevard chanting “We don’t want a prison nation! Stop mass incarceration!” and “Stop and Frisk! Prison Gates! They don’t keep our city safe!” among many other crowd favorites.

Protesters marched to 117th and Malcolm X, where they stopped in front of a Wells Fargo bank and used the people’s mic to talk about Wells Fargo’s investment in the GEO group and other private prison corporations that profit from seeing people languish behind bars. The last stop was the State Office Building on 125th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard, where a final mini-speakout was held. Speakers emphasized that this Day of Action was proposed by our brothers inside Pelican Bay prison and reaffirmed the commitment to fight the prison industrial complex and all its manifestations.

Washington, D.C.

Around 100 people gathered in front of the District of Columbia Jail on Feb. 20 chanting “DC say no to the new Jim Crow,” and “Jobs not jails.” The spirited crowd, which included many former prisoners, marched, rallied and held a press conference in solidarity with prisoners and against mass incarceration. Organizers highlighted the weekly pickets promoting a local boycott of Wells Fargo, a major investor in private prisons that hold DC prisoners. PSL member and member of the Jobs not Jails coalition Eugene Puryear highlighted past efforts supporting the human rights of the incarcerated in the District including a mass rally against mass incarceration held Jan. 14.

A number of family members of those incarcerated at the DC Jail also shared their stories, highlighting the challenges faced by loved ones of DC inmates.

Speakers came from a wide variety of groups in the Washington, D.C., area including Cease Fire: Don’t Smoke the Brothers and Sisters, Returning Citizens United, PSL, Supporting Prisoners Acting for Radical Change and the Occupy DC Criminal Justice Committee.



ART Attack!

Understanding The Weak

Father came to prison and got a tattoo
 Heart with an arrow through Mom's name
 Hepatitis, he's sick with swollen liver disease
 Mama left him because he drinks to ease the pain
 An ex-pig farmer being farmed now by the pigs
 An ex-junkie who's made peace with
 All the lingering psychotic delusions
 An ex-hillbilly progressed into an anti-Amerikkan
 Anti-imperialist in an imperialist's skin
 I am hated by my family for hating them
 Hated by fellow white prisoners
 For understanding the weaknesses inside of them
 I live to sweat and sweat to live
 With a swollen liver like my father
 And ex-girls like my mother
 Not letting me see my kids
 Losing everything I was once taught to love
 Loving everything I was once taught to hate
 I've lost everyone I once thought I loved
 Understanding the necessity now
 In inciting a reactionary hate
 I'm dying though I've just barely begun to live
 Having a family that chooses not to have me
 Being destroyed by a country that swears its correcting me
 Sanity's mostly solitary in the Land of the Crazy
 If what you say is right, you need fear no criticism
 Democracy for the Rich- that is the Democracy of Capitalist Society
 If what you are is a Revolutionary Gay,
 fuck Amerikkanism
 Democracy for everyone- Death to Imperialism

-Brandon, Utah



Outside San Quentin, Calif. Feb. 20
 Photo: occupy4prisoners.org



Outside San Quentin, Calif. Feb. 20
 Photo: Krissana Limlamai



Emma & Reed, Nashua St. Jail in Boston, Feb. 20
 Photo: Kade E.

know your history! tell your stories



Outside Lincoln Correctional Facility, Harlem, Feb. 20

Photo: Karina Garcia

My Letter of Wisdom

An article in the January 2012 issue of Black & Pink touched my soul. I not only can relate, I also go through the same inner soul searching and spirit seeking about being gay and religious. But God loves whoever loves him. You have to love yourself. Don't at all pay any mind to many people in Religion because most will mislead you. Listen to God. You are not a freak or confused person. You are beautiful as the earth itself. I feel your pain but the key to overcoming your pain is to know yourself and love your self and only trust in God's wisdom. I write this poem to you.

Trust and believe, God is here for you and me
Tears will fall and pain will come
But God supports me and you and all his children
Homosexuals and people in general, God loves all
who loves him, very simple
So don't stress or feel sad
God is here for you to give you his helping hand
It is so hard to believe
I love my Gay Black and Pink family because they
are part of me
God feels the same trust and you will see

To all my Gay Brothers and Sisters

Love,
Steven AKA Half Pint, Pennsylvania

The Wedding

Witnessed a marriage today,
The men even shared a kiss.
For them it's prison happiness,
For them this is bliss.

There won't be a honeymoon,
Some corner they will sneak.
The intimacy that they share,
In prison gossip it will leak.

How long it will last,
Nobody will ever know.
One minute they're both together,
The next, one has to go.

Just another aspect of prison,
No different from the street.
In here you're never amazed,
By the kind of people you meet.
-Kitty, New York

Sunset

Slowly the west reaches for clothes of new colors
Which it passes to a row of ancient trees.
You look, and soon these two worlds both leave you,
One part climbs toward heaven, one sinks to earth.

Leaving you, not really belonging to either,
Not so hopelessly dark as that house that is silent,
Not so unswervingly given to the eternal as that thing
That turns to a star each night and climbs-

Leaving you, it's impossible to untangle the thread
Your own life, standing high and growing
So that, sometimes blocked in, sometimes reaching out,
One moment your life is a stone in you, and next, a star.

-Greg, Missouri



March 17, 1912 – August 24, 1987

*Activist,
Pacifist,
Hero*

Part 2

The Post-World War II Period

On release from prison, Rustin got involved again with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, which staged a journey of reconciliation through four Southern and border states in 1947 to test the application of the Supreme Court's recent ruling that discrimination in seating in interstate transportation was illegal. Rustin's resistance to North Carolina's Jim Crow law against integration in transportation earned him twenty-eight days' hard labor on a chain gang, where he met with the usual racist taunts and tortures on the part of his imprisoners.

Between 1947 and 1952, Rustin traveled first to India and then to Africa under the aegis of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, exploring the nonviolent dimensions of the Indian and Ghanaian independence movements.

In 1953 Rustin was arrested for public indecency in Pasadena, California, while lecturing under the auspices of the American Association of University Women. It was the first time that Rustin's homosexuality had come into public attention, and at that time homosexual behavior in all states was a criminal offense. Although the gay rights movement in the United States was still many years in the future, Rustin's conviction and his relatively open attitude about his homosexuality set the stage for him to become an elder gay icon in the decades to come. As the years went on, gay rights became of a piece with his belief in the inherent dignity of Afro-Americans and other oppressed people. As a consequence of his arrest, Rustin was released from his position on the staff of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

It was at this low point in his life that Bayard Rustin began a twelve-year stint as executive secretary of the War Resisters League. Rustin also contributed greatly to a compilation of pacifist strategy, published in *The Progressive* and also as a monograph in 1959 by the American Friends Service Committee and entitled *Speak Truth to Power*.

In 1956 Rustin was approached by Lillian Smith, the celebrated Southern novelist who authored *Strange Fruit*, to provide Dr. Martin Luther King with some practical advice on how to apply Gandhian principles of nonviolence to the boycott of public transportation then taking shape in Montgomery, Alabama. On spent time in Montgomery and Birmingham embraced principles of nonviolence in his large role in the birth of the Southern Prayer Pilgrimage to Washington that took Eisenhower to enforce the Supreme Court's desegregated. Rustin was also instrumental Schools in 1958 and 1959.



leave from the War Resisters League, Rustin advising King, who had not yet completely struggle. By 1957, Rustin was busy playing a Christian Leadership Conference and in the place on May 17, 1957 to urge President 1954 ruling that the nation's schools be in organizing two Youth Marches for Integrated

The 1960's

Arguably the high point of Bayard Rustin's Jobs and Freedom which took place on King's stirring "I Have a Dream" speech. architect. To devise a march of at least one coordinate the various sometimes fractious was a herculean feat of mobilization.

By 1965 Rustin had come to believe come to an end; the legal foundation for

Now came the larger, more difficult task of forging an alliance of dispossessed groups in American society into a progressive force. Rustin saw this coalition encompassing Afro-Americans and other minorities, trade unions, liberals, and religious groups. That Rustin's plan of action did not go further was, in the opinion of several political analysts, because of the war in Vietnam, whose enormous monetary, psychological, and spiritual cost managed to subsume any progressive movement. Rustin's steadfast opposition to identity politics also came under criticism by exponents of the developing Black Power movement. His critical stance toward affirmative action programs and black studies departments in American universities was not a popular viewpoint among many of his fellow Afro-Americans, and as at various other times of his life Rustin found himself to a certain extent isolated.

Another viewpoint which did not endear Bayard Rustin to many leftists or radical Black Power adherents was his consistent support of Israel. In the wake of the Holocaust, Rustin believed very strongly that the Jews needed their own state. While further believing that the state of Israel had been guilty of injustices against Palestinians, he nonetheless contended that the vituperative clamor on the part of Middle Eastern states to destroy Israel had provoked many of the excesses of the Israeli government.

Later Years

In the late 1970s and 1980s, Rustin worked as a delegate for the organization Freedom House, monitoring elections and the status of human rights in countries like Chile, El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Poland, and Zimbabwe. In all his efforts Rustin evinced a lifelong, unwavering conviction in behalf of the value of democratic principles.

It was Rustin's human rights expedition to Haiti in 1987 that drew the final curtain on his remarkable life. After his visit, under the aegis of Freedom House, to study prospects for democratic elections in that unhappy country, Rustin began to feel unwell. His symptoms were initially misdiagnosed as intestinal parasites, but on August 21, 1987, Rustin was admitted to Lenox Hill Hospital and diagnosed with a perforated appendix. He died of cardiac arrest on August 24.

Although Bayard Rustin lived in the shadow of more charismatic civil rights leaders, he can lay real claim to have been an indispensable unsung force behind the movement toward equality for America's black citizens, and more largely for the rights of humans around the globe, in the twentieth century. Throughout his life, Rustin's Quakerism was a unifying force in his life and a strong plank in his personal philosophy, incorporating beliefs that were of central importance to him: that there is that of God in every person, that all are entitled to a decent life, and that a life of service to others is the way to happiness and true fulfillment.

political career was the March on Washington for August 28, 1963, the place of Dr. Martin Luther Rustin was by all accounts the March's chief -quarter of a million participants and to civil rights organizations that played a part in it

that the period for militant street action had segregation had been irrevocably shattered.

Keep in Touch w/ Black & Pink
Black & Pink—{Insert topic tag here}
c/o Community Church of Boston
565 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116



Help us by using these topic tags

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Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

LEGAL: Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. "Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work."

Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$24 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner and Men Against Sexism organizer, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to:
Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 2420, West Brattleboro, VT 05303

SURVIVORS: Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.

Ms. Chris Daley, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010

THANK YOU ALL!

We are now receiving hundreds of letters each month. There are only a few of us able to read mail at any time, so we are usually a few months behind and working hard to get people added to the newsletter mailing list and the penpal list. We are unable to answer letters personally most of the time. If you write with a specific subject line in your address, for example: "Black & Pink- Religious" or "Black & Pink- Newsletter Submission", we can get it to the right place faster.

But we are mostly unable to answer letters personally at this time.

Thanks for your patience!
B&P Free World Leadership Circle